

» *The Southern* WORKFORCE INDEX



➤ *The Southern*
WORKFORCE INDEX
April 2005

By Carol Conway and Sandra Johnson

Copyright © 2005, Southern Growth Policies Board



⇒ Table of Contents

Introduction	2
The Indicators	4
The Index	5
A Closer Look	6
State Index Pages	13
Endnotes	28
Appendix	30
Acknowledgements	33

➤ Introduction

The 2002 Report on the Future of the South, *The Mercedes and the Magnolia*, was created under the aegis of the Council for a New Economy Workforce, Southern Growth Policies Board's standing advisory body for workforce-related issues. That report was written in the context of Southern Growth's vision: All citizens of the South will experience an exemplary quality of life made possible by a dynamic, diversified, growing, sustainable, and competitive Southern economy.

An educated, skilled and upwardly-competitive workforce is the necessary foundation for the pursuit of such an economy. In fact, as Southern Growth has consistently held, no region's economy can rise higher than the aggregate knowledge and skills of its workforce. Given this reality, *The Mercedes and the Magnolia* called for the addition of a new goal to Southern Growth's "Statement of Regional Objectives." On June 9, 2002, the Board adopted that goal: Create the talent pool needed to meet the ongoing market needs and opportunities of the emerging, knowledge-based economy.

The Southern Workforce Index will measure, on an ongoing basis, the Southern Growth states' progress towards the realization of that goal. The Council for a New Economy Workforce has chosen 15 indicators that, taken together, provide a rich, broadly based portrait of the region's workforce. *The Index* is not designed to play states off against each other. Rather, it is intended as a guide for states to pursue their own, individualized strategies. Future editions of the Index will feature long-term targets – set by the states themselves – for what each state hopes to accomplish in each indicator category. It is far less important for a state to beat its neighbor in some specific category than it is for the state to make real and sustained progress towards its own vision of prosperity.

The Mercedes and the Magnolia (<http://www.southern.org/pubs/magnolia/magnolia.pdf>) traced the South's economic development history, noting its remarkable success in industrial recruitment and the associated creation of a "branch-plant economy." Those successes triggered a 30-year economic expansion during which the South's per capita income outpaced the national average, a period that extended into the 1980s.

The South responded less well to the rise of technology and globalization that began to accelerate during the 1980s. The initial pangs of losing labor-intensive manufacturing firms were not as hard felt due the economic boom of the 1990s and the rise of the service industry. Workers previously employed in manufacturing sought newer service sector jobs, which often tended to be low-skill, low wage employment. The South's growth stalled relative to the nation.

The recent recession magnified the impact of the emergence of the knowledge economy. Low-skill, labor-intensive jobs were replaced by technology or outsourced to other parts of the world at an increasing rate, resulting in a two-tier labor market. The knowledge economy's premium on education and technical skills widened the wage gap between skilled and unskilled workers.

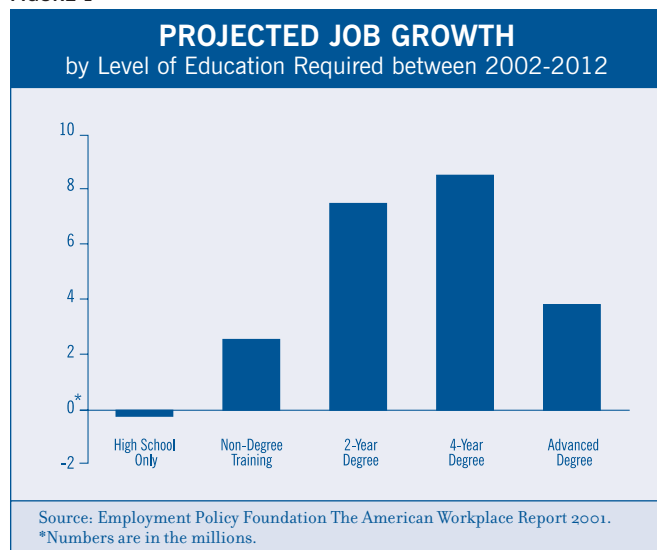
All of that leaves the South with an historic challenge: are we willing to work cheaper or will we choose to work smarter. Working smarter means responding to the workforce goal approved by the Council for a New Economy Workforce and the Southern Growth Policies Board. The Council and Board also approved three major objectives to guide the region's progress towards realizing the workforce goal.



OBJECTIVE ONE: Create seamless workforce systems that maximize client control over the outcomes. (Institutional Seamlessness)

Today, six out of ten jobs require some type of post-secondary education and training compared to two out of ten jobs in 1959.¹ By 2012, a third of America's jobs will require a bachelor's degree or higher (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1



Yet the traditional workforce development system is not adequately equipped to raise skill levels, largely because the workforce development system is a fragmented collection of services delivered through program “silos.” People in one silo are often unaware of people and programs in another, or view other programs as competitors. The elimination of these silos creates “institutional seamlessness,” a workforce development system where individuals and firms can access with ease, needed education, training and resources.

Some recent reforms have helped create institutional seamlessness, but the elimination of program silos is only part of the challenge. A seamless system can still be dysfunctional. Therefore, progress also requires greater client control – linking services to real needs. Increased client control allows people and firms to select available services according to their situation, or create them when the services do not exist.

When people and businesses have more control over their education and training they are more likely to get what they need, not just what any single service has to offer. They also share in responsibility for the outcomes.

OBJECTIVE TWO: Capitalize on available human capital by identifying and developing underutilized sources of workers and talent. (Wasted Human Capital)

In the span of one generation (1980-2000) the proportion of American workers with an education beyond high school increased 19 percent. Yet in the next generation (2000-2020) that growth rate will slow to 15 percent. Furthermore, declining birth rates and the pending retirement of baby boomers suggests that there may not be enough people, much less skilled people, to sustain economic growth in the South or nation. Given the potential labor shortage, states must proactively engage and educate all individuals, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender and disability.

OBJECTIVE THREE: Create a self-directed workforce with the attitudes, learning habits and decision tools necessary for making wise career choices throughout life. (Self-Directed Workforce)

In an economy where jobs churn frequently, and where business niches come and go, people must assume greater responsibility for choosing educational paths, staying informed about the economy and updating their knowledge base. In turn, the education and workforce development system must support them with better guidance.

The Southern Workforce Index attempts to track progress in these three goal areas. Together, the 15 indicators are intended to be used as a tool for states to benchmark and track their progress. Because data availability and the region's workforce needs will change over time, this Index is a living document. It will be updated bi-annually and adjusted to reflect the evolving economy and to best measure the performance of the South's workforce development system.

➤ The Indicators

- 1 **Grades 9-16 Completion Rates**
The percent of 9th graders that: A) graduate from high school in four years; B) immediately enroll in college; and C) earn an associate's degree in four years or less or a bachelor's degree in six years or less.
- 2 **The Percent of Post-Secondary Institutions Providing Dual Enrollment Credits**
The percent of institutions allowing students to enroll and earn post-secondary credits while simultaneously enrolled in high school.
- 3 **Percent of Working-Age Adults with an Associate's Degree or Higher**
The percent of adults between the ages of 25 and 64 educated at an associate's degree level or higher.
- 4 **Four-year High School Graduation Rates**
The percent of 9th graders finishing high school within 4 years.
- 5 **Hispanic High School Graduation Rates**
The percent of Hispanic 9th graders finishing high school in 4 years.
- 6 **The Percent of the Workforce in At-Risk Occupations**
The percent of the workforce employed in occupations with minimal skill requirements and persistently high unemployment rates. At-risk occupations are defined as: machining operators, assemblers, inspectors, equipment handlers, cleaners, helpers, and laborers.
- 7 **The Percent of the Working-Age Disabled Employed**
The percent of disabled persons aged 21-64 with a full or part-time job.
- 8 **The Disparity in Unemployment Between Black and White Males**
Black male unemployment as a ratio of white male unemployment.
- 9 **Incarceration Rates**
Number of prisoners (per 100,00 residents) under state and federal jurisdiction authorities.
- 10 **Job Retention Rates After Receiving WIA Services**
Percent of adults and dislocated workers acquiring and retaining employment for six months after receiving services provided under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).
- 11 **Percent of the Workforce Without a High School Degree Enrolled in Adult Education Programs**
The number of participants enrolled in a state-administered adult education program as a percent of the adult (18-64) population with less than a high school diploma.
- 12 **The Share of Family Income Poor Students Must Dedicate Toward a College Education**
The share of income that families in the bottom quintile must dedicate toward the annual cost of attending a public two- or four-year college, after financial aid.
- 13 **The Percent of 8th Graders Enrolled in Algebra I**
The percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra for the 2001-2002 school year.
- 14 **The Percent of 8th Grade Math Teachers Participating in Professional Development Activities**
The percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in a professional math-related conference within the last two years.
- 15 **The Percent of 8th Graders Reading for Fun on a Weekly Basis**
The percents of 8th graders reading for fun – on their own – once a week or more.

The South vs. United States

◇ The South
✠ United States



1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	◇ —16%	✠ —18%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	◇ —37%	✠ —30%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	◇ —31%	✠ —36%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	◇ —62%	✠ —66%
5. Hispanic high school graduation rates	◇ —36%	✠ —48%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	◇ —11%	✠ —9%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	◇ —34%	✠ —38%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	◇ —176%	✠ —202%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	◇ —515	✠ —476
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	◇ —88%	✠ —87%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	◇ —9%	✠ —10%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	◇ —39%	✠ —40%
13. Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	◇ —14%	✠ —22%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	◇ —62%	✠ —67%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	◇ —18%	✠ —19%



➔ A Closer Look

➔ INDICATOR ONE ◀

Grades 9–16 Completion Rates

The South's success in a global economy is highly contingent on its ability to create a seamless system that will increase the number of students obtaining a degree beyond high school. One way to increase the pool of educated workers is by better connecting the education pipeline – that is, to increase the number of students finishing high school and continuing on to earn a college degree. This indicator measures the percent of 9th graders that: A) graduate from high school in four years; B) immediately enroll in college; C) earn an associate's degree in four years or less or earn a bachelor's degree in six years or less.

Only three Southern states exhibit higher completion rates than the nation. In Virginia, North Carolina and Missouri, more than 18 percent of 9th graders finish high school and college in less than 10 years. For the South as a whole, less than 16 percent of students get through the pipeline in a timely manner compared to the national average of 18 percent (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2

GRADES 9-16 COMPLETION RATES	
Percent graduating in a timely manner	
The South	16%
United States	18%
Source: The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2002.	

➔ INDICATOR TWO ◀

The Percent of Post-Secondary Institutions Providing Dual Enrollment Credits

Dual enrollment is an effective strategy to increase high school graduation, college enrollment and college completion. Dual enrollment programs bridge the gap between high school and college, allowing students to earn college credits while simultaneously working toward a high school diploma. Many dual enrollment courses are provided on a campus, offering the student more rigorous content and new confidence that they “fit in” with the college environment.²

The good news for the South is that a higher proportion of post-secondary institutions are providing dual enrollment opportunities. Thirty-seven percent of colleges and universities in the South provide dual enrollment opportunities compared to 30 percent nationwide (Figure 3). Evidence suggests that dual enrollment may actually be

most beneficial for lower-level achievers.³ Yet, nearly half of the states in the South limit dual enrollment to academically advanced students.⁴ An even smaller number of Southern states provide dual enrollment students with tuition assistance.

FIGURE 3

DUAL ENROLLMENT CREDITS	
Percent Post-Secondary Institutions Providing Dual Enrollment Credits	
The South	37%
United States	30%
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated post-secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Peer Analysis System, 2002.	



➤ INDICATOR THREE ◀

The Percent of Working-Age Adults with an Associate's Degree or Higher

An increasing proportion of manufacturing jobs require post-secondary training, particularly at the two-year level. In a National Association of Manufacturers survey, more than 80 percent of companies reported a moderate to high shortage of skilled workers.⁵ To successfully attract industry, Southern states must boost education attainment at the associate's degree level.

Under-educated workers represent wasted human capital. Nationwide, 36 percent of the workforce has a two-year degree or more, versus 31 percent for the South. Many states are working hard to increase the number of adults with an associate's degree, but the skill gap doesn't stop there. As it now stands, 24 percent of older Southern workers hold a four-year degree versus 25 percent of younger Southern workers (Figure 4). This might appear

adequate, but a growing share of new jobs require a bachelor's degree, meaning a larger share of the younger generation need this credential. Four Southern states face a crisis in which the younger group has proportionately fewer bachelor's degrees than the older workers.⁶

FIGURE 4

POTENTIAL SKILLS CRISIS Resulting From Retirements		
	Percent Working-Age Adults with Assoc. Degree or Higher*	Ratio Well-Educated Younger Workers to Well-Educated Older Workers**
The South	31%	105%
United States	36%	103%

Source: American Community Survey, 2003.
 *Working Age adults aged 25-64 years old
 **Younger workers aged 25-44 years old; Older workers aged 45-64 years old.

➤ INDICATOR FOUR ◀

Four-Year High School Graduation Rates

According to research released by the U.S. Small Business Administration, economic growth is directly tied to educational attainment, particularly at the high school level.⁷ The South's lower educational attainment level has already affected the region's competitiveness. During the last two decades, the South's "footprint" in the U.S. economy actually shrank. In 1980, the South produced 19.7 percent of the National Gross State Product (GSP). By 2000, Southern GSP had declined to 19.6 percent (Figure 5). This small loss represents \$3 billion dollars. It is rising GSP per capita that increases the standard of living.⁸ In eight Southern states, the GSP per worker grew less than the national average.

A higher percentage of Southerners fall out of the education pipeline at every point. The achievement gap between the South and the U.S. is the widest at the high school level. Sixty-two percent of Southerners graduate from high school on time compared to 66 percent of all U.S. students (Figure 6). The gap is important. If the South increased four-year high school graduation rates to the national average there would be nearly one million more educated workers in the Southern economy.

FIGURE 5

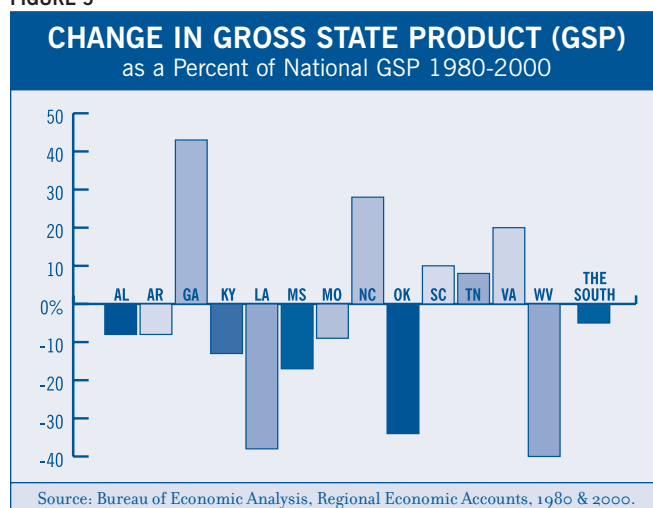


FIGURE 6

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES in Four Years	
The South.....	62%
United States.....	66%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, 2003.



➔ A Closer Look *continued*

➔ INDICATOR FIVE ◀

Four-Year Hispanic High School Graduation Rates

As baby boomers retire, the nation and the South will become increasingly reliant on immigration as a source of new workers. According to the U.S. Census, the Hispanic population is now the largest minority subgroup in America.⁹ From 1980-2000, the South's Hispanic population increased by more than 400 percent. Developing a highly skilled workforce is contingent on the South's ability to engage and educate minorities.

Sixty-six percent of students in the South graduate from high school in four years, but only 36 percent of Hispanic students finish high school in the same length of time (Figure 7). Only two Southern states, Louisiana and West

Virginia, have higher Hispanic high school graduation rates than the nation. Interestingly, Puerto Rico has one of the best overall high school graduation rates in the South.

FIGURE 7

HISPANIC HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES in Four Years

The South*	36%
United States	48%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, 2003.
*The Hispanic graduation rate for the South excludes Puerto Rico.

➔ INDICATOR SIX ◀

The Percentage of the Workforce in At-Risk Occupations

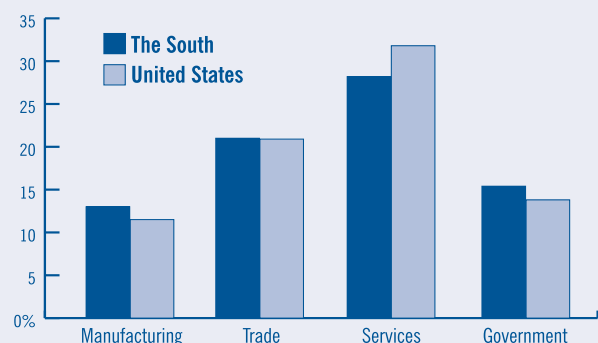
From 1980-2000, manufacturing employment declined 33 percent in the South versus 37 percent nationwide. The South, however, is more dependent on manufacturing as a source of employment (Figure 8). As modern manufacturing becomes increasingly high-tech, the South is again likely to be hard hit. This is because a larger share of the South's remaining manufacturing workers are in low-skill positions.

Low-skill manufacturing jobs, such as machine operators, assemblers, inspectors, equipment handlers, cleaners, helpers, and laborers represent declining occupations in today's economy. (These jobs are referred to here as "at risk" occupations.) At-risk occupations employ those with little training or education and, as a result, these workers experience higher unemployment rates. In 2002, one out of 17 (5.8 percent) American workers were unemployed; meanwhile, one out of ten (10.2 percent) workers in at-risk occupations lacked jobs.

These at-risk occupations represent a larger proportion of the Southern economy. Eleven percent of the Southern workforce is employed in at-risk occupations versus nine percent nationally (Figure 9).

FIGURE 8

2000 EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, 2000.

FIGURE 9

AT-RISK OCCUPATIONS as a Percent of the Labor Force

South	11%
United States	9%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment, 2002.

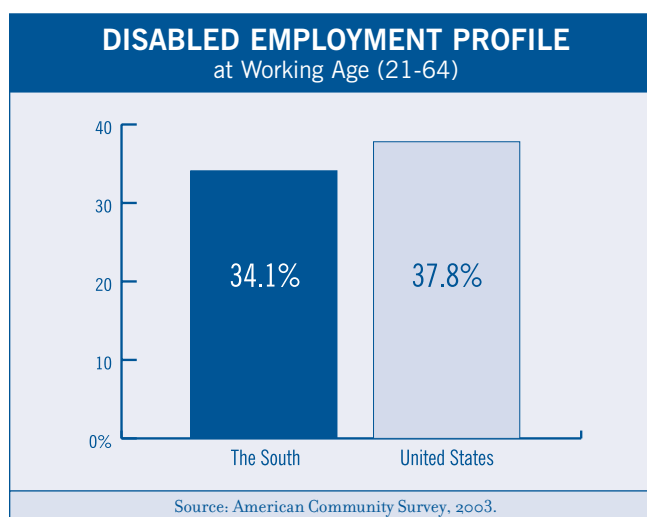


↔ INDICATOR SEVEN ↔

The Percent of Working-Age Disabled that are Employed

Individuals with disabilities traditionally have lower levels of workforce participation rates, attributed in part to barriers to work, not an unwillingness to work.¹⁰ Nationwide, less than 40 percent of working-age adults with disabilities are in the workforce, which experts regard as unnecessarily low.¹¹ Only three Southern states – Missouri, Oklahoma and Virginia – have disability employment levels that exceed the national average. Thirty-four percent of adults with disabilities in the South are employed compared to 38 percent nationwide (Figure 10). Since 11 Southern states have disability rates above the national average, the South could reclaim an even larger share of its under-utilized human capital.¹²

FIGURE 10



↔ INDICATOR EIGHT ↔

The Disparity in Unemployment Between Black and White Males

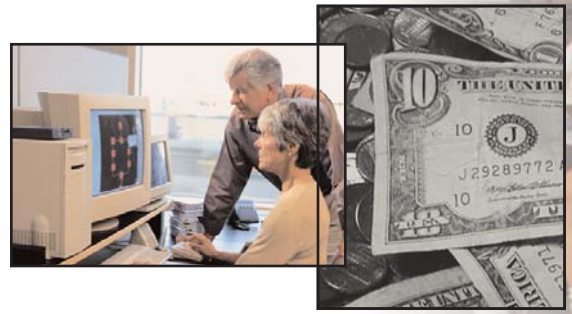
For the South and the U.S. as a whole, the racial disparities in unemployment represent pockets of wasted human capital. Even for individuals with the same level of education and experience, minorities exhibit higher rates of unemployment.¹³ Males are used as the benchmark because African-American males are even more vulnerable to unemployment than African-American females.¹⁴ As a result of past and continuing disenfranchisement, black males have lower levels of academic achievement and higher unemployment and incarceration rates than any other racial or ethnic subgroup.¹⁵ According to the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, the real black male unemployment rates are masked by rising incarceration rates.¹⁶ Men who otherwise would be counted as unemployed are actually incarcerated.

The South as a whole exhibits lower racial disparities in unemployment (Figure 11). However, performance varies greatly among Southern states. Kentucky has the lowest disparity with a 20 percent differential between black and white male unemployment.

FIGURE 11

MALE JOBLESSNESS Prevalence by Race		
	Male Unempl. Rate	Black Male Unempl. as a Ratio of White Male Unempl.
The South	5.3%	176%
United States	5.9%	202%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment, 2002.



➔ A Closer Look *continued*

➔ INDICATOR NINE ◀

Incarceration Rates

Imprisonment also represents another sector of wasted human capital since a criminal record often makes a person virtually unemployable. Today approximately one in 20 men have been imprisoned; the ratio is one in six for black males. If incarceration rates remained unchanged, one in nine American males born in 2001 will be imprisoned during their lifetime. Predicted incarceration rates are higher for minorities. One in three African-American males and one in six Hispanic males born in 2001 will be imprisoned during their lifetime.¹⁷

During the past 15 years incarceration rates have doubled. The South's incarceration rate is considerably higher than the national average (Figure 12). Between 1987 and 2002, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee and West Virginia's incarceration rates nearly tripled.

Not surprising, the states with the highest incarceration rates also exhibit the greatest disparities in black and white male unemployment.

Research has shown education and early intervention programs effectively reduce the likelihood of imprisonment for at-risk populations. In addition, early intervention programs are more cost-effective than imprisonment. In 2001 alone, the annual cost of incarceration was three times the cost of a student's education. The nation spent an average of \$22,650 per inmate compared to \$7,701 in per-pupil education expenditures.¹⁸ Southern states spent \$16,620 per inmate compared to the region's \$6,613 per-pupil investment.

FIGURE 12

INCARCERATION RATES* under State and Federal Jurisdiction Authorities	
The South	515
United States	476
Source: US Bureau of Justice Statistics, Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics, 2002. *per 100,000 residents	

➔ INDICATOR TEN ◀

Job Retention Rates After Receiving WIA Services

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds a significant portion of state workforce development activities. WIA job retention rates – the share of clients in a job six months after the service – acts as a proxy measure of both wasted human capital and the ability of clients to take charge of their career paths. As shown in Figure 13, WIA clients in the South are actually more likely to retain employment. However, Southern WIA clients are also less likely to complete the program, making them vulnerable to repeated job dislocation. According to research, clients completing WIA-supported training boost their six-month earnings by \$1,050 dollars a year, and have job retention rates higher

than those receiving only core services (e.g., skills assessment and job location assistance).¹⁹ The impact of opting out early from training services is significant.

FIGURE 13

EMPLOYMENT RETENTION RATES after Receiving WIA Services	
The South	88.4%
United States	86.9%
Source: US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, 2003.	



➤ INDICATOR ELEVEN ◀

Percent of the Workforce Without a High School Education Enrolled in Adult Educational Programs

To get a higher paying job or get into college at any level, adults must have a high school education. In 2003, nine percent of workers without a high school degree were unemployed compared to 5.5 percent for workers with a high school degree. Low-skill adults are often cyclically unemployed.

Participation in adult education programs is a proxy for both program accessibility (institutional seamlessness) and self-direction. Approximately six million Southerners between the ages of 18 and 64 lack a high school degree, with roughly a quarter of these individuals educated below

the 9th grade level. Only nine percent of those without a high school education were enrolled in an adult education program (Figure 14).

FIGURE 14

LOW SKILLED ADULTS Percent Enrolled in Adult Education Programs	
The South	9%
United States	10%
Source: American Community Survey; US Department of Education, Office of Adult and Vocational Education, 2003.	

➤ INDICATOR TWELVE ◀

Share of Family Income Poor Students Must Dedicate Towards a College Education

Many low-skill adults want to pursue more education and training, but lack the resources to do so. Southern states do a better job than the nation as a whole in ensuring college affordability. They tend to award more grant dollars per-pupil and maintain lower tuition rates. Despite this, less support is provided to those with the biggest financial barrier – low-income students. Of every grant dollar Southern states award, a needy student receives less than \$0.50 compared to the national average of \$0.73. Even after state and federal financial aid, the full cost of a two- or four-year degree (tuition plus living expenses) represents 39 percent of a low-income family's annual earnings (Figure 15).

For many low-income and non-traditional students, community colleges provide an alternate route to post-

secondary education.²⁰ Yet in some states, community college tuition alone is a significant barrier for the poorest 20 percent of families. After all aid, community college tuition costs still represents more than ten percent of family income in three Southern states.²¹

FIGURE 15

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION Share of Family Income Paid By Low-Income* Students at Public Two- & Four-Year Colleges	
The South	39%
United States	40%
Source: The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2003. *Low income: families in the bottom quintile; Percent indicated is after financial aid.	

➤ A Closer Look *continued*

➤ INDICATOR THIRTEEN ◀

The Percent of 8th Graders Enrolled in Algebra I

Taking Algebra I before entering high school is considered essential for a college-bound student. Algebra I is a prerequisite for taking advanced classes in high school, meaning a student who misses it in middle school is forever playing catch-up. This benchmark uses information from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSO) national survey. A total of 33 states participated in the survey, six of which were Southern. The benchmark is only a rough measure of math competency because the curriculum covered in 8th grade Algebra varies greatly by state. The South is eight percentage points behind the national average (Figure 16). The national percentage of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I has been rising for the past 12 years.

In 2002, 22 percent of 8th grade students took Algebra I, a 10 percent increase over 1990.²² Two states – Missouri and West Virginia – have a higher proportion of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I than the nation.

FIGURE 16

PERCENT 8TH GRADERS ENROLLED IN ALGEBRA I

The South*	14%
United States	22%

Source: Council of Chief State School Officers, 2003.

*The average for the South include states participating in the Council of Chief State School Officers survey or providing the information by request: AR, GA, KY, LA, MS, MO, NC, WV.

➤ INDICATOR FOURTEEN ◀

The Percent of 8th Grade Math Teachers Participating in Professional Development Activities

Math and science teachers – the teachers with the most career options – often leave for higher pay and less stress. One method shown to reduce teacher turnover and strengthen the linkage between school and work is teacher professional development. Professional development provides teachers a chance to learn about the latest advancements in the field and to better inform students of their career options. The good news is that more than half of Southern math teachers participated in a professional development activity within the last two years. Unfortunately, it's not enough: most other states provided

a larger share of their teachers with professional development (Figure 17).

FIGURE 17

8TH GRADE MATH TEACHERS Percent Participating in Professional Development Activities

The South	61.6%
United States	66.9%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2002.

➤ INDICATOR FIFTEEN ◀

The Percent of 8th Graders Reading for Fun

Leisure reading is strongly related to self-motivation and positive attitudes toward lifetime learning. Reading boosts student achievement and aids in the development of analytical and problem-solving skills. The percent of 8th graders reading for fun serves as a proxy for the share of students who enjoy learning and voluntarily engage in personal enrichment activities. A slightly lower proportion of Southern 8th graders engage in leisure reading as compared to the nation (Figure 18).²³

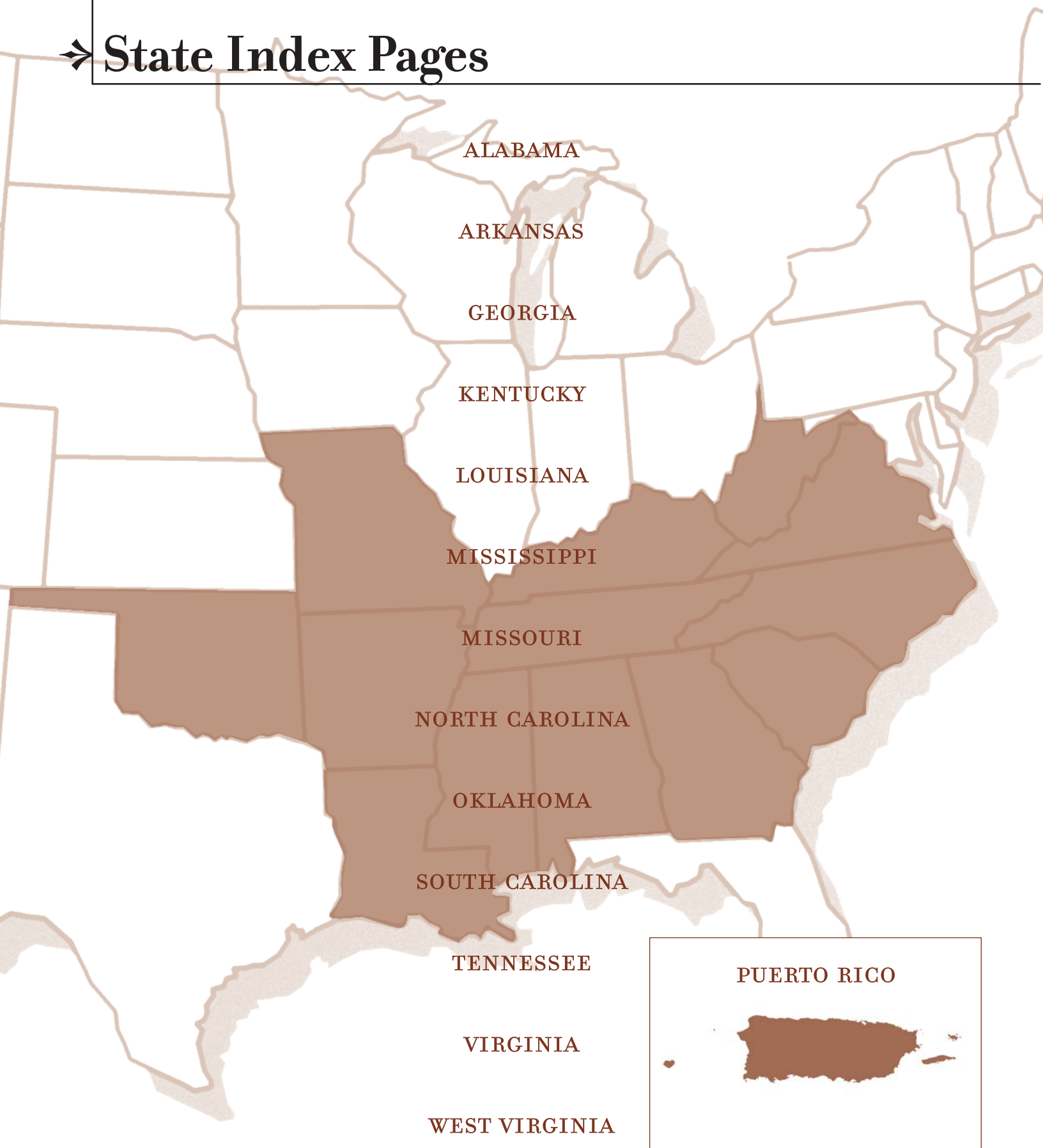
FIGURE 18

8TH GRADERS READING FOR FUN on a Weekly Basis

The South	18.2%
United States	19.0%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2002.

➤ State Index Pages



➤ Alabama

☆ Alabama
◇ The South

As part of his continuing efforts to reform and streamline state government, Gov. Bob Riley signed an executive order in 2003, to consolidate state workforce development programs into a single office. Prior to the Executive Order, there were seven different state agencies administering more than \$100 million in federal workforce security and development funds. Various programs of workforce development were handled by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, the Department of Industrial Relations, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Rehabilitative Services, the Department of Children's Affairs, the Department of Education, and the Alabama post-secondary Education System.

The Executive Order mandated the formation of a "Workforce Planning Council" to develop, administer and coordinate the implementation of a comprehensive State Plan for Workforce Development, with input from the State Workforce Investment Act Board. The Council is composed of the Director of the Office of Workforce Development, the Chancellor of post-secondary Education, the Director of Economic and Community Affairs, the Director of Industrial Relations, the Director of the Alabama Development Office, the Commissioner of the Department of Human Resources, the Director of Alabama Industrial Development Training, the Superintendent of Education, the president of a two-year college and a representative from Alabama business.

The State Plan was presented to and approved by the Governor in 2004. Task forces were formed to begin implementing the plan including Labor Market Information/Job Forecasting, Health Care, Information Technology, 21st Century Technician, Youth, Black Belt Area Workforce, Worker Certification, Industrial Systems Technology, Work Ethics, Economic and Workforce Development Alignment, External Funding, Simplification and Marketing.

The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	☆ — 12%
	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	☆ — 60%
	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	☆ — 30%
	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	☆ — 59%
	◇ — 62%
5. Hispanic high school graduation rates	☆ — 27%
	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	☆ — 12%
	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	☆ — 30%
	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	☆ — 288%
	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	☆ — 612
	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	☆ — 87%
	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	☆ — 5%
	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	☆ — 44%
	◇ — 39%
13. *Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	☆ N/A
	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	☆ — 49%
	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	☆ — 17%
	◇ — 18%

*Data not available for this state.

➤ Arkansas

Arkansas was one of eight states awarded a modest grant from the National Governors' Association to conduct a three-year pilot project to improve adult post-secondary educational attainment. Called "Career Pathways," it is an inter-agency program designed to get those who dropped out of school back into education. It takes a person from wherever they are and moves them up the educational ladder. At the same time, the program also identifies jobs in high demand and tries to steer participants in those directions. Arkansas has allocated \$8 million to offer Career Pathways through eight different colleges. Three colleges will focus on the auto industry sector and target people who are eligible for welfare.

The state realized that in dealing with adult education it also had to deal with access to financial aid and support services, like childcare. Therefore, Arkansas started a scholarship program (Workforce Improvement Grant) for people over 24 years of age.

To help prevent more adult under-education, the state has 17 secondary career centers located on the campuses of area community colleges. These offer high school students college credit while still in high school. The state is also working to improve career planning in the high schools. There is a computerized assessment for every student, organized roughly around the 16 federally identified career clusters. It can show student career interests by high school, county, or any other division. The assessment requires only one hour – meaning it can be done in one period – and can be used in parent-teacher conferences. Kids relate well to it, as it is in the form of "point and click," and they have access to a separate Arkansas web site so they can connect to career awareness sites and national data. The site also gives some personal examples of what has happened to successful Arkansas students.

☆ Arkansas
◇ The South

The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	☆ — 15%
	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	☆ — 41%
	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	☆ — 27%
	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	☆ — 74%
	◇ — 62%
5. Hispanic high school graduation rates	☆ — 45%
	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	☆ — 13%
	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	☆ — 35%
	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	☆ — 366%
	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	☆ — 479
	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	☆ — 93%
	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	☆ — 14%
	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	☆ — 38%
	◇ — 39%
13. Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	☆ — 21%
	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	☆ — 68%
	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	☆ — 19%
	◇ — 18%

➤ Georgia

The Central Educational Center (CEC) is a model for both seamless and career-driven education. It is a publicly funded charter high school in Newnan, the product of a partnership between Coweta County Schools, West Central Technical College, and business and industry. Within the first four-years of operation, CEC served more than 3,400 students and reduced Coweta's high school dropout rate by 42 percent. CEC reinvented education by inviting businesses to aid in curriculum design, provide work-based and project-based learning opportunities, and merge applied academics with career and technical training.

"Team members" (students) at CEC attend voluntarily from one of three high schools in Coweta County and may still participate in regular high school activities. These team members graduate from the high school in which they are enrolled, just like other students. Courses they take at CEC seamlessly combine traditional and applied academics with career and technical education, providing opportunities for work-based and project-based learning, teamwork, and a high set of expectations for personal and professional achievement.

Team members receive two grades per course – one for their academic performance and a separate grade for work ethic. Team members may also take dual-enrollment classes in conjunction with West Central Technical College, earning simultaneous credit in high school and college. High school team members take classes with adult learners, and adults also enroll at CEC for GED, night technical college courses, and custom training for local corporations. CEC has been named a national Model High School, and has received a grant from the Georgia Department of Education to enable other local communities to receive direct assistance in creating their own charter schools based on CEC's model.

☆ Georgia
◇ The South

The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	☆ — 13%
	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	☆ — 52%
	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	☆ — 32%
	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	☆ — 56%
	◇ — 62%
5. Hispanic high school graduation rates	☆ — 23%
	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	☆ — 10%
	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	☆ — 35%
	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	☆ — 238%
	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	☆ — 552
	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	☆ — 88%
	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	☆ — 12%
	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	☆ — 36%
	◇ — 39%
13. Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	☆ — 5%
	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	☆ — 56%
	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	☆ — 18%
	◇ — 18%

➤ Kentucky

Sullivan University has a partnership program with the Kentucky Technical and Community College System, the only one of its kind in the nation. Sullivan University is a private, for-profit business serving tens of thousands of students in multiple locations around the world. The mission of Sullivan University is not to compete with public education, but to collaborate with other institutions to do things neither could do well on its own. For instance, Sullivan University does not want to specialize in training nursing aides but is willing to take the enrollment overflow from the community colleges. Being private, the university can get creative on the spot. It has, for example, opened a 24 hour live help desk for students doing online learning. Sullivan University enjoys a 99 percent placement rate, in part due to the fact that students must declare a major before entering. Sullivan also has the ability to track its graduates.

Sullivan is growing rapidly in terms of students, scope and global reach. In addition to providing online training, Sullivan has a contract with the United Nations to teach dispute resolution. The university is also involved in health-related projects in Italy, Spain, the UK and Germany.

Sullivan University's specialty is its ability to rapidly produce curriculum. This allows the university to work closely with businesses to develop company specific training programs for incumbent workers. Sullivan also works with the companies to provide affordable training. Several of Sullivan's corporate clients cover their employees' full tuition costs to attend the university. At Metro College, where students go part-time while employed, the employer agrees to pay back installments on the student's loan for as long as the learner stays with the company.

★ Kentucky
◇ The South

The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	★ — 15%
	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	★ — 43%
	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	★ — 27%
	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	★ — 65%
	◇ — 62%
5. Hispanic high school graduation rates	★ — 36%
	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	★ — 11%
	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	★ — 28%
	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	★ — 122%
	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	★ — 380
	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	★ — 91%
	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	★ — 7%
	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	★ — 35%
	◇ — 39%
13. Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	★ — 15%
	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	★ — 61%
	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	★ — 17%
	◇ — 18%

➤ Louisiana

★ Louisiana
◇ The South

Shortly after entering office, Governor Kathleen Blanco created a Workforce Enterprise Team, which, for the first time, brought state agency heads together to focus on communication, coordination and collaboration. The initiative is staffed out of the Governor's office via the Louisiana Workforce Commission, which functions as the state's Workforce Investment Board.

Governor Blanco believes that workforce development efforts need to be balanced to focus on both workers and businesses. In that vein, Louisiana has developed more than 30 industry certifications, and is now working on a basic qualification for manufacturing including a certified manufacturing specialist (CMS) designation.

The state has also created a Work Ready! Certificate, a credential that certifies to employers that an applicant has basic skills required for success in a job. The Work Ready! Certificate is not an alternative to the GED or a high school diploma, but in the absence of either, it serves as an indicator of work readiness. The certificates, signed by the Governor, are awarded to students in high schools, adult education classes, community colleges and one-stop centers statewide. Most sites have correlated software that provide skill upgrades leading to the certificate. The state is encouraging employers to use the certificates in hiring and promotion decisions.

Louisiana has the ability to report, by school system, what happens to students after high school, linked to the first-time college freshman report and annual statistical report. The data is matched against jobs that will be available to students.

The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	★ — 13%
	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	★ — 41%
	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	★ — 26%
	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	★ — 59%
	◇ — 62%
5. Hispanic high school graduation rates	★ — 53%
	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	★ — 9%
	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	★ — 32%
	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	★ — 349%
	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	★ — 794
	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	★ — 88%
	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	★ — 6%
	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	★ — 41%
	◇ — 39%
13. Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	★ — 4%
	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	★ — 62%
	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	★ — 16%
	◇ — 18%

➤ Mississippi

Mississippi Lignite Mining Company (MLMC) is a new and emerging industry in the state of Mississippi – the only coal mining company in the state. In an effort to integrate environmental research and awareness of mining careers, MLMC partnered with the Mississippi State University (MSU) Center for Science, Mathematics and Technology to develop the Career and Research Exploration for Students and Teachers (CREST). The initiative was funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation.

The overall goal of CREST is to introduce geosciences education, research and career awareness to underrepresented groups from school districts surrounding the mine. The middle schools that participate have a minority population ranging from 25 to 100 percent, and are located within driving distance to the mine. After two years, a total of 11 teams – composed of one science teacher and two or three middle school students – attended the two-week MLMC sessions conducting geosciences research with mine personnel and MSU scientists. Students and teachers gained expertise in the subject matter as well as research methods. Hands-on research accompanied by appropriate lectures in the areas of ecology, geology and reclamation gave students and teachers experiences with data collection, data analysis and data interpretation. They were exposed to issues of mining and the environmental impact of the mine.

This collaborative effort acquainted middle school students and their teachers with the basic skills required of today's technology-oriented workforce, increased awareness of environmental issues, and promoted career opportunities in science and engineering.

☆ Mississippi
◇ The South

The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	☆ — 13%
	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	☆ — 44%
	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	☆ — 41%
	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	☆ — 58%
	◇ — 62%
5. Hispanic high school graduation rates	☆ — 24%
	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	☆ — 13%
	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	☆ — 32%
	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	☆ — 361%
	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	☆ — 743
	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	☆ — 87%
	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	☆ — 10%
	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	☆ — 28%
	◇ — 39%
13. Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	☆ — 13%
	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	☆ — 60%
	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	☆ — 16%
	◇ — 18%

➤ Missouri

★ Missouri
◇ The South

In the late 1990s, when the state provided additional funds for public university “mission enhancement,” Southeast Missouri State University (“Southeast”) decided to use part of its new funds to build a School of Polytechnic Studies. Today Southeast has more than 500 students majoring in polytechnic studies, including advanced manufacturing technology. The post-graduation placement rate is 100 percent, and many remain in the immediate area and state.

Southeast used another portion of the mission enhancement funds to establish three new area higher education centers (AHECs) in the rural portions of its service area. Southeastern Missouri has the state's lowest educational levels and highest percentage of poverty. Southeast is the only four-year college that serves that quadrant of the state. The AHECs provide residents with traditional college classes offered by Southeast and two area community colleges, as well as distance learning courses broadcast from Southeast by instruction television.

As a result of these outreach efforts, approximately 2000 rural students are now enrolled for college credit in the AHECs. In 2005-06, Southeast will begin offering a bachelor's degree in general studies via distance learning. The degree is highly flexible since students are not required to declare a major, and may choose only the classes that are most relevant to their job aspirations.

The distance learning centers required deep partnerships at the local level. Local sources provided buildings, but Southeast funded operating and maintenance costs of the centers until recent state budget cuts forced a sharing of those costs with the community colleges. In each case, communities do fundraising each year to support scholarships for area students, and the current endowment is well over \$1.1 million. Virtually all the scholarships are need-based.

The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	★ — 20%	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	★ — 32%	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	★ — 33%	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	★ — 73%	◇ — 62%
5. Hispanic high school graduation rates	★ — 48%	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	★ — 10%	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	★ — 38%	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	★ — 246%	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	★ — 529	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	★ — 88%	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	★ — 9%	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	★ — 44%	◇ — 39%
13. Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	★ — 23%	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	★ — 71%	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	★ — 18%	◇ — 18%

North Carolina

☆ North Carolina
◇ The South

In September 2004, North Carolina Governor Mike Easley announced a new program designed to reduce high school dropouts and prepare at-risk youth for high skill jobs. Learn and Earn pairs community colleges or universities with high schools to create a new model of secondary education. In these Learn and Earn schools, students earn an associate's degree from community college – or two years of university credit – by the time they graduate from high school. Noting that many firms coming to the state prefer workers with education beyond high school, Easley remarked, "For students who plan on entering the workforce, what is needed is a more relevant educational experience that will prepare them to compete in the global marketplace."

Learn and Earn is one element of a larger "New Schools Project" (NSP) initiative managed by the Public School Forum, a not-for-profit policy think tank that is a partnership of state business leaders, educational leaders, and governmental leaders. NSP was established with an \$11 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The North Carolina Education Cabinet, convened by the Governor, provides direct oversight of the NSP. For more information, see (<http://www.newschoolsproject.org/early.html>).

Learn and Earn has 15 initial pilot schools, five of which have admitted students for the current school year; ten additional start-up sites will admit students in 2005-2006 school year. The first five Learn and Earn sites are in Buncombe, Catawba, Durham, Guilford and Nash counties.

The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	☆ — 19%
	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	☆ — 71%
	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	☆ — 57%
	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	☆ — 60%
	◇ — 62%
5. Hispanic high school graduation rates	☆ — 28%
	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	☆ — 12%
	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	☆ — 35%
	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	☆ — 196%
	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	☆ — 345
	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	☆ — 92%
	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	☆ — 12%
	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	☆ — 31%
	◇ — 39%
13. Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	☆ — 19%
	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	☆ — 59%
	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	☆ — 21%
	◇ — 18%

➤ Oklahoma

★ Oklahoma
◇ The South

Like many other states, Oklahoma is reforming its workforce system to support the state's economic growth. Governor Brad Henry has championed this vision by reconstituting the state's Workforce Investment Board (WIB) as the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development ("the Council"), creating a Deputy Secretary of Commerce for Workforce Development, moving the Employment Security Commission to the Commerce Cabinet and asking stakeholder agencies to designate executive level staff to a Workforce Solution's Staff Team (WSST). This team supports the Council and is forming the agenda to align workforce system toward its common objectives.

To assure that its strategic plan and recommendations were data-driven, the Council launched the following initiatives: an employer satisfaction and needs assessment survey of 3700 state employers; "sense of urgency" focus groups held across the state; Economic Development 101 workshops for workforce and economic development professionals; regional labor market studies; and statewide industry clusters studies. These research projects have been jointly supported by the Department of Commerce, Employment Service, Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education and Career Tech.

In addition, the Council has built capacity in the local and regional WIBs to interweave workforce and economic development. In October 2004, the Governor's Summit on Economic and Workforce Development was held to create a stronger economy in Oklahoma and offer practical strategies and tactics to position a community to grow.

In order to meet the ever-increasing needs of rural communities, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce has planned a series of four Rural Economic Development summits for each of the state's quadrants this spring. Oklahoma also created 11 regional Business Service Teams to act as a single point of contact for employers. Team members provide market intelligence, consult on human resources issues, and link other state resources available for business development.

The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	★ — 13%
	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	★ — 27%
	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	★ — 29%
	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	★ — 73%
	◇ — 62%
5. Hispanic high school graduation rates	★ — 47%
	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	★ — 9%
	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	★ — 40%
	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	★ — 195%
	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	★ — 667
	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	★ — 88%
	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	★ — 5%
	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	★ — 36%
	◇ — 39%
13. Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	★ — 9%
	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	★ — 58%
	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	★ — 21%
	◇ — 18%

➤ Puerto Rico

The Puerto Rico Technoeconomic Corridor (PRTEC) is a nonprofit organization established in 1999 to “build the ultimate business paradise.” It works by connecting industry, academia and government in efforts to promote innovation and high technology industry in the western region of Puerto Rico.

PRTEC objectives are to:

- Make Puerto Rico recognized as a world-class center for high technology.
- Create and maintain jobs.
- Attract new industries to the region.
- Create a culture of innovation, research and development in the region.
- Establish an entrepreneurial mentality in society.
- Improve the quality of life of citizens.

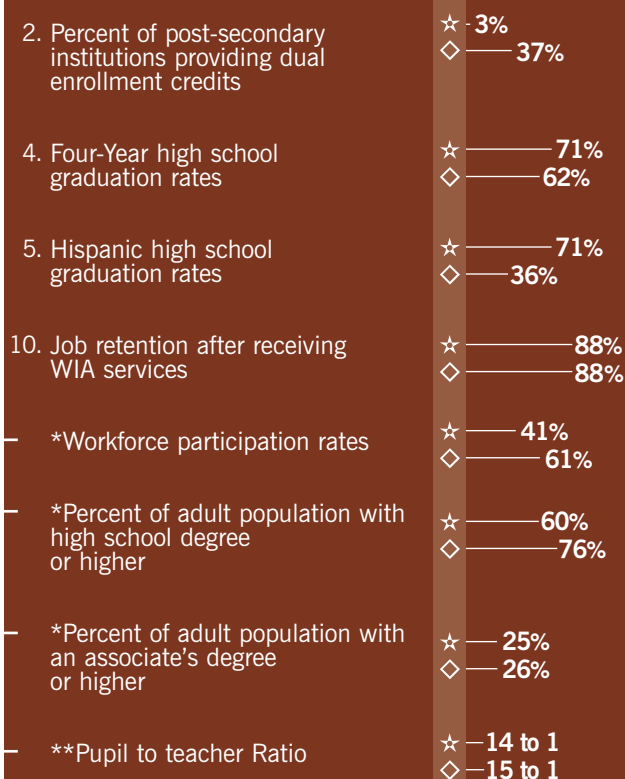
PRTEC is working on three main initiatives. The first one is improving the physical infrastructure for high tech industry (e.g. research & technology parks).

The second initiative focuses on the Information Technology and Medical Devices industries. In this effort, companies belonging to these sectors are brought together to share best practices and training, capitalize on supply chain synergies, and work together with university R&D projects to improve the competitive position of the members of each cluster.

Finally, PRTEC operates the only high tech business incubator in Puerto Rico. It focuses its effort on helping tenant enterprises commercialize their products and/or technologies. These companies in turn help in the economic development of the region by fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and the creation of jobs.

★ Puerto Rico
◇ The South

The Indicators...



*Source: 2000 U.S. Census

** NCES 2002-2003 Common Core Data

The Census Bureau and other data-reporting organizations typically do not provide information for U.S. Territories to the same degree as they do for states. An effort will be made in future issues to locate the data through Island or international sources.

➤ South Carolina

☆ South Carolina
◇ The South

The Duke Endowment's Program for the Rural Carolinas has the goal of helping people get back on their feet after being left behind by the changing economy. The Waccamaw Workforce Investment Board, located in Georgetown, SC, received a grant from the foundation's program to focus on its least-served and highest risk population – underprivileged African-American young adult males.

The Waccamaw Workforce Investment Board created REACH2 (Rehabilitation, Education and Creating Healthy Homes). It is comprehensive in its approach, addressing each individual participant's needs through the program's vast network of partners. The aims of REACH2 are to provide skills and work experience to needy African-American young adult males. The occupational vehicle for this is the construction trade.

The training phases for the participants consist of GED preparation or educational upgrades in math and reading, life skill training, computer skills, technical training in construction trades and on-the-job training. Participants apply their new skills to rehabilitating homes in a selected rural community.

Founding Partners for REACH2 include Five Rivers Community Development Corporation, Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments, Duncan United Memorial Methodist Church and Habitat for Humanity of Georgetown County. Partners that joined later in the process were the City of Georgetown, Georgetown County, Occupational Training and Development of South Carolina, the Pee Dee Community residents, Horry-Georgetown Technical College and the Georgetown Workforce Investment Center.

The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	☆ — 13%
	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	☆ — 47%
	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	☆ — 31%
	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	☆ — 49%
	◇ — 62%
5. *Hispanic high school graduation rates	☆ N/A
	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	☆ — 11%
	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	☆ — 33%
	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	☆ — 216%
	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	☆ — 555
	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	☆ — 88%
	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	☆ — 16%
	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	☆ — 51%
	◇ — 39%
13. *Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	☆ N/A
	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	☆ — 69%
	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	☆ — 19%
	◇ — 18%

*Data not available for this state.

➤ Tennessee

The Knoxville Utilities Board (KUB) is a case study of a company committed to workforce development for itself and the wider community. KUB is a distributor of gas, wastewater, and electricity; its workforce has to be very diverse in terms of skills.

It's been a challenge to recruit staff particularly for the wastewater section. No post-secondary education is needed in many of those areas. Training is mostly through on-the-job and apprenticeship.

KUB created a "Teamwork" program whereby it partnered with an inner city high school to familiarize young people to the job potential at KUB. The Teamwork program starts with high school sophomores. In their junior year, faculty nominate kids to participate in formal training at KUB after school. KUB kids also have to do a relatively complex community project. The exercise is a great contribution to building character, whether the kids ever come back to KUB or not.

KUB partners with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development and the Chamber to do an hour of training each week. Participation in the after school lectures make them eligible to apply for paid summer jobs. (The KUB summer intern jobs pay two dollars above minimum hourly wage.) After the summer, the students are tested for interests and skills, and are given assignments for the next summer's job. If they go to college they can still come back and work during breaks. If not, they can go straight into lineman positions and other KUB jobs.

★ Tennessee
◇ The South

The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	★ — 16%	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	★ — 34%	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	★ — 29%	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	★ — 61%	◇ — 62%
5. *Hispanic high school graduation rates	★ N/A	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	★ — 12%	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	★ — 36%	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	★ — 268%	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	★ — 430	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	★ — 89%	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	★ — 8%	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	★ — 45%	◇ — 39%
13. Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	★ — 14%	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	★ — 62%	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	★ — 17%	◇ — 18%

*Data not available for this state.

➤ Virginia

More than 60 percent of Emporia, Virginia's students live in poverty and, in 1999, not one 5th grader could correctly multiply 3×119 . Yet by 2003, the school's pass rate in math went from zero percent to 78 percent. One reason was that half of all students were taking Algebra I in the 8th grade, up from only five percent in the previous years. Research shows that Algebra in the 8th grade is a key predictor of future educational success.

Getting to college is one challenge; staying in college is another. Some 60 percent of Virginia students entering a two-year degree program drop out after their first year. Some of this is attributed to students' ill-informed career choices. The state created a committee to help a consortium of schools "make-over" guidance counseling. The Hampton Roads Partnership consists of 17 counties and cities, including Virginia Beach. In Virginia Beach, the pilot for the initiative, there were three recommendations:

- 1) Hire a clinical psychologist to spend two days a week in each school to assist in complex counseling issues. After three sessions with a regular guidance counselor, a child has to be referred to the professional.
- 2) Assign one guidance counselor for every 350 students, each assigned to a specific grade level. Although the ratio is typical of other schools, the counselors will focus more effort on improving academic and workforce readiness.
- 3) Create a "student expectation profile" whereby the student declares his or her post-graduation intentions. In the process, students learn how to get to where they want to go (e.g., how to pay for tuition) and identify ways to get certifications or college credit while in high school.

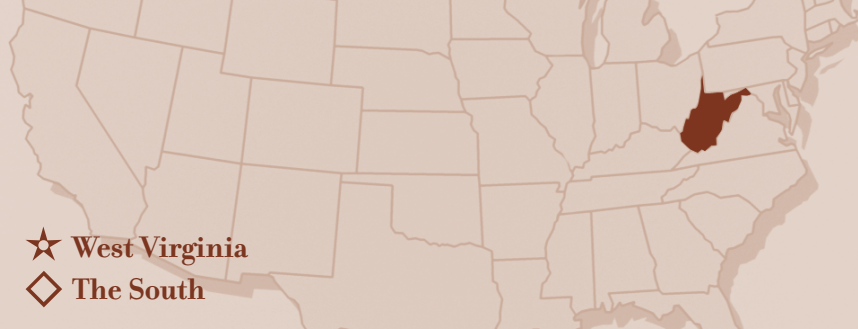


The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	☆ — 22%
	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	☆ — 30%
	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	☆ — 40%
	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	☆ — 74%
	◇ — 62%
5. Hispanic high school graduation rates	☆ — 47%
	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	☆ — 8%
	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	☆ — 36%
	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	☆ — 243%
	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	☆ — 460
	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	☆ — 88%
	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	☆ — 5%
	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	☆ — 45%
	◇ — 39%
13. *Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	☆ N/A
	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	☆ — 67%
	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	☆ — 19%
	◇ — 18%

*Data not available for this state.

West Virginia



West Virginia has taken a highly comprehensive approach to workforce development reform. In 2004, the state issued a major report, “The State of the One-Stop,” that looks at what agencies are contributing to each of the one-stop operations. The one-stops were all renamed under the single banner of “WORKFORCE West Virginia” in order to standardize the services and make them easier to use when the client straddles two or more regions.

West Virginia also did an analysis of all federal and state workforce programs – 42 total, encompassing some \$566 million in funds. The study divides the programs into three categories:

- 1) those that are clearly workforce development;
- 2) those that are partly workforce development – like TANF (Temporary Aid for Needy Families), cash assistance and work supports; and
- 3) unemployment compensation programs.

This analysis will be conducted annually. In addition, West Virginia has put into place, by legislative action, an Interagency Collaborative Team Planning Compact to encourage cooperation, communication and coordination of eight state agencies toward workforce development. Other states doing this are Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New York.

The state is also looking at the employer side of workforce development. It has developed an employer user guide, and will work on getting more businesses to tap into the system. The state has negotiated with the U.S. Department of Labor over the definition of core assessment services, and is now using WorkKeys for everyone. Assessments are delivered through the one-stops, and then entered into an online worker profile. The state will next look at how agencies are sharing the information.

The Indicators...

1. Grades 9-16 completion rates	☆ — 14%
	◇ — 16%
2. Percent of post-secondary institutions providing dual enrollment credits	☆ — 18%
	◇ — 37%
3. Percent of working-age adults with an associate's degree or higher	☆ — 24%
	◇ — 31%
4. Four-Year high school graduation rates	☆ — 71%
	◇ — 62%
5. Hispanic high school graduation rates	☆ — 68%
	◇ — 36%
6. Percent of workforce in at-risk occupations	☆ — 9%
	◇ — 11%
7. Percent of working-age disabled employed	☆ — 25%
	◇ — 34%
8. The disparity in unemployment between black and white males	☆ — 167%
	◇ — 176%
9. Incarceration rates (per 100,000 residents)	☆ — 250
	◇ — 515
10. Job retention rates after receiving WIA services	☆ — 86%
	◇ — 88%
11. Percent of the workforce without a high school education enrolled in adult education programs	☆ — 6%
	◇ — 9%
12. The share of family income poor students must dedicate toward a college education	☆ — 61%
	◇ — 39%
13. Percent of 8th graders enrolled in Algebra I	☆ — 25%
	◇ — 14%
14. Percent of 8th grade math teachers participating in professional development activities	☆ — 62%
	◇ — 62%
15. Percent of 8th graders reading for fun on a weekly basis	☆ — 16%
	◇ — 18%

➤ Endnotes

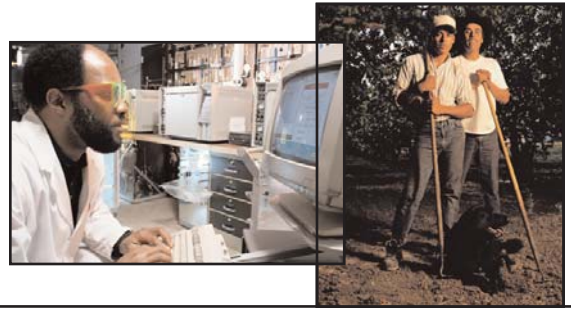


- ¹ Carnevale, Anthony P. and Donna M. Desrochers. Educational Testing Service. "Standards for What?: The Economic Roots of K-16 Reform." 2003. (http://www.ets.org/research/dload/standards_for_what.pdf).
- ² Karp, Melinda M., Thomas R. Bailey, Katherine L. Hughes, and Baranda J. Fermin. "State Dual Enrollment Policies: Addressing Access and Quality." March 2004. (http://www.tc.columbia.edu/ccrc/PAPERS/CBT_State_Dual_04.pdf).
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ The six states are: Alabama, Georgia, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Virginia. Source: "State Dual Enrollment Policies: Addressing Access and Quality."
- ⁵ National Association of Manufacturers. "The Skills Gap, 2001." (http://www.nam.org/s_nam/bin.asp?CID=179&DID=227473&DOC=FILE.PDF).
- ⁶ The four states in which younger workers (25-44 years of age) have fewer bachelor's degrees than older workers are: Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and North Carolina.
- ⁷ U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy report, "Using Census Business Information Tracking System (BITS) to Explore Entrepreneurship, Geography and Economic Growth." February 2005. (<http://www.sba.gov/advo/research/rs248tot.pdf>).
- ⁸ Ibid. Page 4.
- ⁹ CBSnews.com "Hispanics Now Largest US Minority." January 2003. (<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/01/21/national/main537369.shtml>).
- ¹⁰ Conway, Carol. "Standards of Practice." December 2003. (http://www.southern.org/pubs/standards_of_practice.pdf).
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Kaiser State Health Facts. "Percent of Persons with a Disability, 2003." (<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/cgi-bin/healthfacts.cgi?action=compare&category=Health+Status&subcategory=Disability&topic=Prevalence+of+Disability>).
- ¹³ Sampson, R. J. "Urban black violence: The effect of male joblessness and family disruption." *American Journal of Sociology*, 93, 348-382. Pg. 351-55. 1987.
- ¹⁴ Presentation. Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, Ohio State University. "Social/Economic Indicators: Comparing Brown Racial Disparity to Today." April 2004.
- ¹⁵ Sampson, R.J.
- ¹⁶ Cave, George. "Higher Incarceration Rates for Black Men: Economic Implications." *FOCUS Magazine*, The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. vol 28. Issue 6. 2000. (<http://www.jointcenter.org/publications/focus/pdf/jun00.pdf>).
- ¹⁷ CNN.com. "Study: 1 in 37 U.S. Adults have Prison Experience." (<http://www.cnn.com/2003/US/Northeast/08/17/prison.stats.ap/>).

✦Endnotes *continued*

- ¹⁸ Bureau of Justice Statistics. State Prison Expenditures 2001. Released 06/04. (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/spe01.pdf>).
- ¹⁹ US Department of Labor. "National Summary of PY2003 Annual Performance Data. Figure D - Other Outcome Information for the Adult Program." (<http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual-report-03.cfm>).
- ²⁰ Broswell, Katherine and C.D. Wilson. ed. The Education Commission of the States and the League for Innovation in the Community College. "Keeping America's Promise: A Report on the Future of the Community College." July 2004. (<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/53/09/5309.pdf>).
- ²¹ The three southern states where families must dedicate ten percent or more of their annual income to community college tuition costs are: Alabama, South Carolina and Tennessee.
- ²² Blank, Rolf K. and Doreen Langesen. "State Indicators of Science and Mathematics Education 2003: State by State Trends and New Indicators from the 2001-02 School Year." Washington, D.C.: Council of Chief State School Officers, 2003.
- ²³ U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2003 Reading Assessments.

➤ Appendix



All indicators are calculated using state-level data. The data for the South represent weighted averages.

Indicator One: Grade 9-16 Completion Rates, 2002

DEFINITION: The percent of 9th graders that: A) graduate from high school in four years; B) immediately enroll in college; and C) earn an associate's degree in four years or less or a bachelor's degree six years or less.

SOURCE: The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. "The Education Pipeline: Big Investment, Big Returns." April 2004. (<http://www.highereducation.org/reports/pipeline/pipeline.pdf>).

Indicator Two: The Percent of Post-Secondary Institutions Providing Dual Enrollment Credits, 2002

DEFINITION: The percent of post-secondary Title IV participating institutions (an institution participating in any of the Title IV federal student financial assistance programs) providing dual enrollment (a program through which high school students may enroll in college courses while still enrolled in high school. Students are not required to apply for admission to the college in order to participate) credits.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics. Integrated post-secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Peer Analysis System. 2002 Survey Data. (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/pas/>).

Indicator Three: The Percent of Working-age Adults with an Associate's Degree or Higher, 2003

DEFINITION: The percent of adults between the ages of 25 and 64 with an associate's degree or higher.

SOURCE: US Census. 2003 American Community Survey. Table PCT033. Sex by age by education attainment for the population 18 and over.

Indicator Four: Four-Year High School Graduation Rates, 2002

DEFINITION: [9th grade enrollment for the 1998-99 school year (multiplied by) percent change in K-12 enrollment from 1998-99 school year to 2002-03 school year] (divided by) 2001-02 school year high school diploma recipients.

SOURCE: National Center of Education Statistics. Common Core of Data. (<http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/bat/>).

Indicator Five: Hispanic Four-Year High School Graduation Rates, 2002

DEFINITION: [9th grade Hispanic enrollment for the 1998-99 school year (multiplied by) percent change in K-12 Hispanic enrollment from 1998-99 school year to 2002-03 school year] (divided by) 2001-02 school year Hispanic high school diploma recipients.

SOURCE: National Center of Education Statistics. Common Core of Data. (<http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/bat/>).

Indicator Six: The Percent of the Workforce in At-Risk Occupations, 2002

DEFINITION: The number of workers employed as machining operators, assemblers, inspectors, equipment handlers, cleaners, helpers, and laborers (divided by) the civilian labor force.

SOURCE: US Department of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment, 2002. Table 14. States: Employment status of the experienced civilian labor force by occupation. (<http://www.bls.gov/opub/gp/gpsec2.htm>).

Indicator Seven: The Percent of Working-Age Disabled that are Employed, 2003

DEFINITION: Disabled persons aged 21-64 with a full or part-time job (divided by) the total number of disabled persons aged 21-64.

SOURCE: US Census. American Community Survey, 2003. Table P059. Sex by Age by Disability Status by Employment Status for the Civilian Non-institutional Population 5+ years.

Appendix *continued*

Indicator Eight: The Disparity in Unemployment Between Black and White Males, 2002

DEFINITION: Black male unemployment rates (divided by) white male unemployment rates.

SOURCE: US Department of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment, 2002. Table 12. States: Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population by sex, age, race, and Hispanic origin, 2002 annual averages. (<http://www.bls.gov/opub/gp/gpsec2.htm>).

Indicator Nine: Incarceration Rates per 100,000 Residents, 2002

DEFINITION: Number of prisoners (per 100,000 residents) under state and federal jurisdiction authorities.

SOURCE: US Bureau of Justice Statistics. Sourcebook of Criminal Justices Statistics, 30th edition. Sourcebook 2002. Table 6.24. Prisoners under jurisdiction of State and Federal correctional authorities, by region and jurisdiction, Dec. 31, 2002 and 2003. (<http://www.albany.edu/sourcebook/pdf/t624.pdf>).

Indicator Ten: Job Retention Rates After Receiving WIA Services, 2003

DEFINITION: The sum of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) participants (adults, dislocated workers, and older youth participants) retaining employment for six months after receiving WIA services (divided by) total number of WIA participants (adults, dislocated workers, and older youth participants).

SOURCE: US Department of Labor. Employment and Training Administration. PY03 WIA National Summary of Annual Performance Data. (http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/wia_national_performance.cfm).

Indicator Eleven: The Percent of the Workforce Without a High School Education Enrolled in Adult Education Programs, 2003

DEFINITION: The number of students enrolled in state-administered adult education programs (divided by) the number of adults aged 18-64 w/ less than a high school degree or equivalent.

SOURCE: US Census. American Community Survey, 2003. Table PCT033. Sex by age by education attainment for the population 18 and over; US Department of Education, Office of Adult and Vocational Education, State-Administered Adult Education Programs PY 2002-2003 Enrollment.

Indicator Twelve: The Share of Family Income Poor Students Must Dedicate Toward a College Education

DEFINITION: [The cost of attending a four-year public college equals the average in-state tuition costs at a public four-year college plus room and board minus the average state and federal financial aid for students in the lowest income quintile, weighted by the percentage of public college students attending a four-year institution in the state.]

(Plus)

[The cost of attending a two-year public college equals the average in-state tuition costs at public two-year college minus the average state and federal financial aid for students in the lowest income quintile, weighted by the percentage of public college students attending a two-year institution in the state.]

(Divided by)

2001-2003 Average family income for families in the bottom quintile.

SOURCE: Altered calculation of "Measuring Up 2004: The National Report Card on Higher Education," published by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. (<http://measuringup.highereducation.org/survey.cfm>).

➤ **Appendix** *continued*

Indicator Thirteen: The Percent of Eight Graders Enrolled in Algebra I, 2002

DEFINITION: The number of 8th grade students enrolled in Algebra I during the 2001-02 SY (divided by) 8th grade enrollment during the 2001-02 SY.

SOURCE: Blank, Rolf K. and Doreen Langesen. State Indicators of Science and Mathematics Education 2003: State by State Trends and New Indicators from the 2001-02 School Year. Washington, D.C.: Council of Chief State School Officers, 2003. (http://www.ccsso.org/projects/Science_and_Mathematics_Education_Indicators/State_by_State_Report/).

Additional data provided by the Georgia Department of Education and the Kentucky Department of Education.

Indicator Fourteen: The Percent of Eight Grade Math Teachers Participating in Professional Development Activities, 2002

DEFINITION: The percent of 8th grade teachers who responded yes to the following question: During the last two years, did you participate in or lead any of the following professional development activities related to the teaching of mathematics? Conference or professional association meeting.

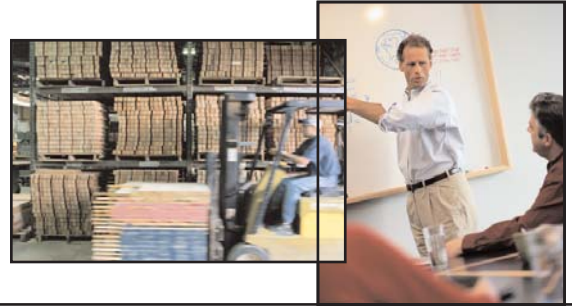
SOURCE: National Center of Education Statistics. National Assessment of Educational Progress. (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>).

Indicator Fifteen: The Percent of Eight Graders Reading for Fun on a Weekly Basis

DEFINITION: The percent of 8th grade students who responded one to two times a week or daily to the following question: How often do you read for fun on your own time?

SOURCE: National Center of Education Statistics. National Assessment of Educational Progress. (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>).

➤ Acknowledgements



Southern Growth Policies Board would like to thank the members and friends of the Council for the New Economy Workforce for their personal guidance in crafting *The Southern Workforce Index*.

Dr. Tim Alford
Director
Office of Workforce Development
Alabama Department of Economic & Community Affairs

Dr. Linda L. Beene
Executive Director
Arkansas Department of Higher Education

Mr. Ed Castile
Director
Alabama Industrial Development Training

Ms. Paula B. Davis
Assistant Commissioner Administrative and Policy Services
Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development

Mr. T. W. Edwards Jr.
President
The Edwards Company

Dr. Edward L. Franklin
Executive Director
Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges

Dr. Timothy V. Franklin
Executive Director
Institute for Advanced Learning & Research

Dr. Carl Hadsell
Resident Associate
Center for Entrepreneurial Studies and Development

Dr. James L. Hudgins
Executive Director
South Carolina Technical College System

Mr. David Lieving
Business & Industrial Development Division
West Virginia Development Office

Ms. Cheryl B. Lockwood
President
Cortez Management Corporation

Dr. Jacquelyn Y. "Jackie" Madry-Taylor
Senior Higher Education Advisor
Adnet Systems, Inc.

Ms. Lynn McGee
Program Officer
Communities of Opportunity
Foundation for the Mid South

Ms. Norma Lynette Noble
Deputy Secretary of Commerce
Office of Workforce Development
Oklahoma Department of Commerce

Ms. Mintha E. Roach
President & CEO
Knoxville Utilities Board

Mr. Allen D. Rose
Vice President of Business & Governmental Relations
The Sullivan University System

The Honorable John Warner Smith
Secretary
Louisiana Department of Labor

Mr. Gene A. Stinson
CED, President
Southern Economic Development Council

Ms. Ann Stokes, President
ESP Construction, Inc. & Commission Member
Louisiana Workforce Commission

Ms. Lydotta Taylor, President
The EdVenture Group

Ms. Chris W. Weaver
Executive Director
Louisiana Workforce Commission

Also, thanks to the Appalachian Regional Commission for an initial grant that got The Southern Workforce Index started.



PO Box 12293 Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

ph 919 941.5145 | fx 919 541.5594 | www.southern.org